



SALISBURY TOURISM AUTHORITY
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SALISBURY TOURISM AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Minutes
March 24, 2010

The Salisbury Tourism and Cultural Development Commission met in the Council Chamber at 217 South Main Street. This meeting was posted on the doors of City Hall and on the City Web site under Special Meeting Notices.

In attendance were: Mr. Boris Bunich, Mr. Bill Burgin, Mr. Randy Hemann, Mr. Mark Lewis, Mr. James Meacham, Ms. Diana Moghrabi, Mr. Joe Morris, Ms. Krista Osterweil, Ms. Barbara Perry, Ms. Michelle Patterson, Mr. John Sofley, Clyde (public)

Absent: Mr. David W. Redden and Councilman Paul Woodson

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Chairman Mark Lewis called the lunch meeting to order at noon. Today's agenda and the minutes of February 15, 2010, and March 3, 2010, were approved as submitted. Members received the report from FountainWorks. These were emailed prior to the meeting and copies made available at the meeting.

City Council appointed Mr. Bill Burgin as Vice Chair of the STCDC at their March 18 City Council meeting.

Handouts included the Occupancy Tax collection report November 2009 through February 2010, the DSI Executive Summary for The Phase One Market Analysis for a new event facility in Salisbury, the commission's Mission and Values, and State Partner Opportunities packet.

FINANCIALS

John Sofley made a treasurer's report. All businesses are now current with the occupancy tax. The total receipts for February were \$24,631.47. Rowan receipts are up from last year. James Meacham reported that the December 2009 receipts were higher than any previous year's December.

The total income since November 2009 is \$90,316.72 – less administration fees of 3 % (\$2,709.50) leaves the net receipts collected \$87, 607.22. Administration fees will help to pay for the audit. The City will provide financial services.

BUDGET/ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES

Startup expenses for the STCDC are covered by the City. If this board is going to spend any money, a budget must be adopted; the budget has to be adopted by May and available to the public for 30 days. John Sofley said he would like to get it in the city budget May 1 to cover the public notifications/advertisement via the city publication.

- 2/3 of revenue must be used for marketing and promotions. (Marketing is restricted.)
- 1/3 of revenue may be used tourism related expenditures including capital projects within the taxing jurisdiction. (unrestricted)

Bill Burgin made a MOTION to adopt a budget using projected Income of \$180,000; Expenditures – Capital \$60,000, Marketing \$120,000 (the amount after 3% administration is taken out.) Randy Hemann seconded the Motion and all members voted AYE.

Bill Burgin then made a MOTION to apply \$55,000 to the Joint Task Force of the Rowan County TDA and Salisbury TDA for marketing, and empower the task force to spend the money and report back to this commission. Barbara Perry seconded the motion with all members voting AYE.

Committees

Mark Lewis suggested building committees around the STCDC charges—a Marketing Committee, a Destination Development Committee, and an Organizational Committee. He suggested three members from the commission on each committee, but other members could come from outside the commission. Committee meetings will be publicized through the secretary and recorded for the secretary to transcribe. These will be available later on the Internet.

One of the first activities for the organizational committee will be to draft bylaws.

Barbara Perry made a MOTION that the Salisbury Tourism and Cultural Development Commission create a Marketing Committee (a minimum of five members), a Destination Development Committee (a minimum of five members), and an Organizational Committee (four members). The TDA Chair will appoint the chairs of those committees and only TDA members can be chairs. Bill Burgin seconded the motion with all members voting AYE.

The chair asked each member to let him know which committee they wish to serve.

INTERMEDIATE MARKETING PLAN

The Joint Tourism Marketing Task Force appointments are: Michelle Patterson, Kelly Alexander, Krista Osterweil, and Steve Hall. Michelle is playing phone tag with one other potential member. She would like to submit the following for consideration by the task force.

Michelle Patterson and James Meacham attended the Governor's Tourism Conference and got back last night. They learned about a new series of integrated marketing campaigns that focus on lead generation and brand awareness. They incorporate print, direct mail and "online" marketing. In addition to reaching the primary market of affordable family travel, they market heritage, arts, and culture in North Carolina. Timing is critical. The task force will meet and report back at the next regular meeting about how to spend the \$55,000 allocated. (This is not part of the annual budget process but an intermediate budget.)

James Meacham said that the state has about a "\$3 million annual cooperative budget which is money they get from partners of private/public sector." Each year at the Governor's Conference they release the "Cooperative Program." The State does their own marketing program; these are programs where you leverage your local dollars with your state dollars.

There are different integrated platforms. There is stuff with the Web site (posting videos about your community, listing events, etc.) Print ads can go in the E-newsletter blast to designated customers; there is a social media aspect, and there is a generation process.

There are two main goals of the cooperative program—Lead generation and brand awareness for the local destination. (Lead refers to a customer)

James introduced affordable indulgences to the group. There are about 16-20 to choose from that run \$3-4000 per partner. There are themes to choose from like outdoor or urban experience, and a cultural heritage program with a Civil War theme.

He believes the state co-ops are the best of all. They take a dominant presence in publication. You can track electronic leads. They are booking now for spring 2011.

Barbara Perry said they had positive experience with the program for the outdoor sculpture show.

UPDATE ON EVENT FACILITY MARKET STUDY

Randy Hemann and Bill Burgin offered information regarding "the key findings of the first phase of a potential two-phased study of the feasibility of a potential new event facility in Salisbury. Conventions, Sports and Leisure International was engaged by DSI to conduct the feasibility study. The summary outlines the key findings associated with the local market conditions, competitive/regional facilities and host communities, comparable facilities and market, industry trends, market surveys and supportable building program options."

The presentation by Downtown Salisbury, Inc. included an executive summary and video demonstration by Bill Burgin of how the facility would work.

Salisbury also did a study in 2005. This study is more market driven. They found there was a moderate demand for a new event facility.

NEW BUSINESS

- Michelle Patterson addressed perceptions at the Governor's Conference. "James is well connected in the state, but at this time advertising vendors and other tourism leaders do not know who to contact to support the Salisbury TCDA's efforts. Please be aware of this as I don't want to see Rowan/Salisbury's standing in the state nor James' reputation diminish due to this confusion. We are in the learning stages and will address these issues, but I wanted you to be aware of the confusion expressed at the convention."
- It was suggested that we have individuals from other counties (New Hanover, Watauga, Caldwell, and Johnston) come to Salisbury for discussion on what those counties do. We could invite both Salisbury and Rowan County TDAs, guests, and elected officials for a summit. The STCDC liked this better than traveling to each place. Staff will put this together.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

NEXT STEPS

The next regular meeting of the STCDC will be April 28, 2010, at noon (lunch provided) in the Council Chamber. The fourth Wednesday of each month at noon will now be the standard meeting time of the STCDC.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Moghrabi